VRTEC TRNOVO

S. Antič, M. Garvas, D. Gobec, M. Kolar, N. Komljanc
and the Trnovo kindergarten teachers

PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION

DIDACTICAL MAP

Zavod
Republike
Slovenije
za šolstvo

TRNOVO KINDERGARTEN

PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION

DIDACTICAL MAP

Authors

S. Antič, M. Garvas, D. Gobec, M. Kolar,
N. Komljanc and the Trnovo kindergarten teachers

Ljubljana, 2019

Title of the original work: Priročnik: Pedagoška inovacija - Didaktični Zemljevid

Title: Manual: Pedagogical innovation – Didactical Map

Authors: Suzana Antič, Mojca Garvas, Mojca Kolar, Dora Gobec, Natalija Komljanc and the Trnovo kindergarten teachers

Consultant: Natalija Komljanc

Translation: Alenka Komljanc

Editor and Graphic design: Renata Mrvar

Photography: archives Trnovo Kindergarten

Published by: Trnovo Kindergarten

First digital edition
Ljubljana, 2019

Kataložni zapis o publikaciji (CIP) pripravili v Narodni in univerzitetni knjižnici v Ljubljani

COBISS.SI-ID=298447872
ISBN 978-961-94611-6-7 (pdf)

INDEX

Foreword 3

Consultant's opinion 5

Introduction 8

Pedagogic innovation in kindergarten 10

Pedagogical innovation I: 13

PROJECT WORK WITH A PUPPET (PWP) 13

Pedagogical innovation II : 20

DIDACTICAL MAP 20

The use of updating - didactical map 22

Pedagogical innovation III: 28

SCHOOL CURRICULUM 28

Case study 35

Conclusion 39

Glossary of terms 41

Bibliography 45

Foreword

This manual is intended for kindergarten and primary school teachers who are interested in project work with a puppet as well as in discovery, research, innovation of education practice, formative assessment, multilayer curriculum, etc.

Project work with a Puppet (PWP) is an experiential, situation and action oriented reflexive learning strategy for children and teachers. In our kindergarten, the project work with a puppet is a curriculum that is process oriented, gradually planned and implemented and an evaluated school curriculum that is created in cooperation between expert workers, other kindergarten staff, children and parents.

To be able to assess and evaluate the PWP, we have developed an innovative pedagogical tool named "didactical map". It is a tool that enables tidy, clear and effective planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation of educational process and which represents an innovation of the forth level - invention.

The inner structure of the didactical map illustrates its applicability. It is a map with several stages, activities and occupations showing how the activities are integrated into a particular project, during annual planning. It also demonstrates how they are mutually related to various occupations and to its sequence. It shows the cohesive thread of planning and hub and the particularities in didactical and content planning as well as the manner in which the activities are organised in accordance with equilibration and harmonisation of school curriculum.

The didactical map is both a tool for feasibility and achievability evaluation of a project as well as encouragement and a starting point for planning future kindergarten projects (Gobec, 2008).

The inventive element of the innovation project is the outcome of development work performed by our team of experts at Trnovo kindergarten over the years. We have invested our knowledge and skills into the creation of an "individual" path toward implementation of school curriculum. Being aware of the importance and wealth of personal and professional knowledge and skills, our potentials were directed toward creative cooperation in order to achieve pedagogical innovation. We have made progress professionally by developing different forms of teaching at the workplace: internal development seminars, cooperative learning, learning from each other, peer-observation, reflections, interventions, independent learning, expert excursions performed by co-workers, etc.

Special emphasis was placed on the teamwork approach (diversity and content variety of teams) including the active and autonomous participation of individuals in regard to their interests, knowledge and abilities. All this enables a systematic, process oriented and highly personal educational process and by doing that we are professionally motivated.

The content of our school curriculum has several layers, which means that we take into consideration several elements such as the needs of children, experts and parents, the vision of educational organisation as well as living space, national standards and the viewpoints of global learning.

Consultant's opinion

Natalija Komljanc, PhD (The National Institute of the Republic of Slovenia): *The innovation project (IP) titled The project work whit a puppet (PWP) - learning, researching and creating of children in the kindergarten; the innovation element - didactical map of Trnovo kindergarten with the project managers Mojca Zupan and Dora Gobec and under the guidance of the headmaster Suzana Antič is nominated as pedagogical invention - discovery.*

Based on the multi-annual pedagogical research of education with a puppet and thorough assessment of the impacts, the project group prepared didactical instrument - a tool - their own guide and improved it through its usage so it can be of use to everyone who is interested.

The didactical map enables holistic and up-to-date planning of education in the kindergarten. Assessing and evaluating impacts influences on re-planning of the educational process of the youngest and their teachers. The procedural planning has lead to the changes in planning of pre-school curriculum which detects and considers the needs of children and teachers' skills, environmental opportunities as well as the possibilities for optimal implementation of the national and global curriculum.

The planning has been accepted by all participants in educational process (mostly children). Each and everyone is doing the best they can to participate in the educational process. This the base for the didactical map to constantly encourage team work, satisfaction of needs and expectations of the youngest and their teachers and to innovatively connect the contents which are a learning magnet for children.

The didactical map has been tested by a larger group of teachers and improved during its usage (see the appendix: didactical map). It is not just one-side structural template, but it is a computer-supported application which enables the teacher simultaneous and constant procedural planning, mutual cooperation and co-influence of the team on the educational work in the kindergarten. It also enables more accurate formative assessment of

education and quick and trustworthy mutual information. At the same time, it can also be used as application for forming a report on the didactical contribution of teachers of the entire kindergarten and also for realization of the vision.

The usage of the didactical map has encouraged the teachers to self-assess - discover the answers to the research questions: 1. How does a child react to the teacher's encouragements? and 2. How does a teacher influence on his/her own professional development?

To conclude, we wish the management and teachers of the kindergarten and the parents and their children to have a prosperous education from the early childhood.

Helena Ina Rupnik (kindergarten teacher): *The didactical map is a tool for effective planning, implementing and assessing of school curriculum. It presents a framework that offers plenty of room for the activities of children and teachers.*

Barbara Hm (parent): *I really like the fact that the whole kindergarten cooperates. They are very creative and innovative. Everyone has their own spot and can contribute to the common goal. This is a very precious form of work from the parents' point of view.*

Introduction

We imagine that you would like to experience something fresh, new, an innovation. Our thoughts and ideas are combined freely (as defined in the Slovenian language dictionary), therefore we will try to introduce them to you and encourage you to devote your attention to them.

We would like you to enjoy the thought of innovation and ideas. Let them inspire you to grasp a new opportunity and maybe even come up with an awesome idea. If our thoughts and ideas are similar, we will be happy to keep you company with this manual or even cooperate with you in practice.

Updating is too often a dull frustration, especially if the management deals with it in the wrong way or if one does not want to improve. Likewise, the problem remains if our colleagues and friends are not there to support our idea at least for a while, until the idea evolves, blossoms and finally occurs. On the other hand, the updating of one's own work can be very interesting, stimulating, rejuvenating, inspiring and creative.

Do you want to know if we got lucky? Yes, we did. We succeeded with the help of Mrs Dora Gobec and the support of the management, them being in close cooperation with the project work, as well as with expert workers who were in continuous contact with the kindergarten staff and children. From time to time, we also had the privilege to gain the support of consultant Natalija Komljanc, PhD. You still do not believe us? In that case, we will enjoy your company even more so you can see for yourself and become interested as well. We will show you the things we are proud of; we will show you our discovery. On the way towards sustainable, reliable and reliable and sensible education in the Trnovo kindergarten, we would like to make new friends.

Updating = pedagogic innovation

Usually we deal with the update process on our own, little by little. But when we wish to have more and to do better, we become more serious and responsible. The members of a team, a project work, support each other; we share our knowledge and our joy. Happiness is an essential element; it is impossible to form a goal without it and the goal is leading us toward innovation.

Innovation starts at the very beginning, when the idea and purpose arise. An innovation project is a suitable form of planning the update, as it assures enough time and space for new ideas, for testing and for prompt feedback from different factors about the positive effect of the pedagogical innovation, "wit" as we call it.

Innovative projects in cooperation with the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia are one of the forms for updating the education system that enable teachers to systematically observe and improve their education. They give us time for reflection on whether the new pedagogic approaches really (reliably and objectively) enable improvements and how are they perceived by us and by those who accompany us - our children of course. Positive changes should be recognised by all education factors that take part proactively in finding and developing pedagogical novelties. This form of updating includes parents, who have the opportunity to not only follow the development of their children, their relationship with others within a social group lead by an educator and the effect of happiness but also to influence directly the contents of the pedagogic novelty.

The term innovation refers to "something new", of course "better" than before and more efficient as well. It refers to an expected change that is adjusted by all the participants in the education. At the same time, innovators are always open to opportunities that arise in the process of discovering the novelty. This is a skill of a detective (detection in the immediate activity), pervaded by search and discovery.

Pedagogic innovation in kindergarten

By implementing the project work with a puppet over the years, the children and kindergarten employees have become real detectives and not only that but they have become producers, scriptwriters, actors, puppet players, film producers and also critics - well, not really, let's just say they have become researchers of their own practice. In doing that, they have never forgotten how to be excellent teachers who not only plan, implement and assess their work coincidentally but as innovators, they dedicate themselves to the process of novelty formation within spontaneous discovery. This makes our kindergarten somehow different, interesting, unusual, exciting for everyone and always consistent.

Our work is guided by research questions that we constantly complement, update, modify and adapt according to the development of innovation. Some of these questions are: "What kind of animations create complex learning situations and pedagogical intervention, so that the child can develop coherent thinking (function)? What basic knowledge does a preschool child need and what kind of education is suitable for him/her?" The answers to these questions can be obtained with the help of our puppet, which is the fruit of the educators' imagination and is created and animated by educators, respecting the guidelines of the project work with a puppet. A puppet can launch an educational situation that triggers an idea in a child (thinking) and consequently also his/her action (speech). Professional staff uses different methods to assess and note the times when the puppet triggers the longest (more complex) thinking processes and reactions. We are also interested in the element that creates the most intensive thinking reactions in a child: "How can we get qualitative feedback from children?" In order to achieve this, simultaneous and continuous self-regulation of pedagogical influence is needed, which can be obtained by reflection on when we achieve the highest level of efficiency in our

leadership, encouragement and when a child is the most efficient without our intervention.

Here are two examples: During the process of education, one of the teachers asked a question at the end of the reflection: "How can I draw poetry out of a child?" and "How can I find a close range of thought development of an individual child in my social learning group?" as written already by Vygotsky (1977).

Self-examination (self-analyse) enables expert workers to discover which learning theories they mainly use and how the parents and their children react to these individual teaching approaches. In this way, leadership of the educational process and teachers' learning becomes more and more conscious, vivid (actual) and systematic. The reason for that is sharing their self-reflections with each other to enable synchronisation (harmonisation) and also to constantly improve their pedagogical practice. To achieve this, they use pedagogical principles recommended when updating pedagogical practice within the innovation projects of the National Education Institute: 1. creating, 2. updating/modifying, 3. accepting ideas and bringing them to life, 4. connecting with each other, 5. spreading ideas and pedagogical novelties, 6. implementing the strategy of action research, 7. discovering our own practice, 8. support of innovation by management, 9. guidance of several levels of novelty development, 10. consultant's support of the innovation, 11. cooperation between the members of the team is optimal, 12. to be guided by research questions, 13. to be guided by a goal, 13. the goal as a pedagogic novelty. You can find more on the educational principles of modification at: http://www.zrss.si/default.asp?rub=212 and learn more about how to become a part of the innovation projects.

Professional staff of IP

Planning of the story

Pedagogical innovation I:

PROJECT WORK WITH A PUPPET (PWP)

During the process of updating practice, the project work with a puppet and the method of action research were the means that helped us develop pedagogical principles that complement one another and are present in everyday life (experiences):

1. **Team work and mutual supplementing:** A Kindergarten functions as a whole, comprising individual expert teams that are engaged in an annual project. The teams can be permanent or occasional, having the purpose to learn from each other, to be connected with each other and to enable adults and children to pass from one activity to another.

2. **Exchange of children and teachers between groups:** We implement vertical cooperation, integration and improvement in our work. In several research workshops, we take into consideration strong fields of personal development of children and adults. This enables a constant possibility for children to choose activities. Moreover, it enables diverse cooperation between peers and adults. In this way, children and expert workers gain experiences through learning in varied social interactions.

3. **Proactive cooperation with parents:** The participation of parents who collaborate in an inventive way with departments: All parents get information via Intranet groups and are invited to participate in implementation of the educational process at the kindergarten. Parents take part by enriching, staying and working at the kindergarten. It is also vital to consider parents' reflections and other forms of feedback on child perception and his or her satisfaction with staying at the kindergarten. Suggestions, responses and questions as well as other forms of communication between parents and experts are evaluated; with their

assistance, the quality of staying and learning at the kindergarten improves constantly.

4. **Awareness of educational mission** (permanent self-reflections and skill updating): Continuous learning and assessing the theory of recognition about child development requires vigilance and the capability of expert workers, since the children communicate and show their needs, wishes and demands for sensible learning and research all the time. Therefore, expert workers make everyone aware continuously how important it is to (self-)reflect within different teams. It is an insight into the performing process of individual activities and into a child's reaction, involvement, learning, behaviour and mutual interactions. To be able to obtain professional and subtle reflection, one needs to learn, improve and exchange mutual experiences and knowledge on a daily basis, which is a common practice in our kindergarten.

5. **Discovery - invention and innovation:** Needs and demands of children, parents' expectations and tendencies of expert workers to achieve personal, professional and social growth are the guidelines for our employees, who perceive innovation as their way of thinking and working. We also react to the demands of the wider social environment, which change constantly.

6. **Integration and connection** - via content and profiles of the expert workers: This section relates to the PWP, which is spread throughout the vertical and horizontal axes through its story that is created in the kindergarten and through several didactical phases. The selection of content is in accordance with the capacities of a child in an individual development phase, offering open opportunities for exchange, excitement and connection between contents and children. Expert workers develop their strong areas within diverse teams such as the multidisciplinary team of employees (social worker, biologist, PE teacher, multimedia teacher, dance teacher, etc.). We intertwine and connect the width and diversity of professional pre-knowledge

and enrich the child's independent discovery and creation, as we are offering different life perspectives and supporting different styles of teaching and discovery and different concepts of this world.

7. **Open hidden curriculum** - as a basis for subjective theory: The creation of PWP has formed an open social environment and innovative possibilities for modified planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation of all education processes in kindergarten. Among other things, we wanted to reduce the impact of present elements of the hidden curriculum. Mutual learning and additional qualification of staff influence reducing the function of so called subjective theories that a person perceives as a constant process of social life.

8. **Social communication network** - clarity and accuracy of mutual communication: Respecting the organisation of work and content of school curriculum, we have formed the principle of cooperation and integration of all involved in the process. A communication network has been developed step by step considering the capabilities and knowledge. We have set up an intranet that connects employees of the kindergarten with different individual departments, parents and expert workers. We have launched the kindergarten's web page. We use pedagogical folders of departments, study folders and CD presentations of activities performed by children. Moreover, we organise informal reunions and other events. The point of the networking is to ensure constant availability for parents so they can contact us whenever they need to.

9. **Children are the core of the educational process:** The school curriculum is formed in such way that children and teachers can create it together. Children and teachers suggest, modify, complete, discover, ask and react to the demands of the environment in which they function and develop.

10. **Children are respected** - The Trnovo kindergarten motto is: "The children are visible (noticed), heard and respected." Respect is ensured through open communication, setting a good example and ethical relations supported by modern learning theories that take into consideration the needs and expectations of children, parents and teachers.

The impact of the story on the updating process

We have replaced the academic learning approach with direct cooperation - co-existence between a teacher and a child. The latter dictates the speed of (self)education and (self)development. The child is the central individual in the educational process. A puppet, on the other hand, has the role of a strong motivator and a launcher of learning activity and it is also a child's friend. The teacher who is an animator (leader) uses strong emotional situations as an opportunity for a child to learn, self-control, self-actualise and self-realise.

The dynamics of communication and perception are enormous. The story unfolds. It is the story of all stories and a reality (actuality) at the same time. The reality is changed, adapted, checked, tested, guessed, adjusted and created according to the needs and expectations of children and teachers who communicate with each other intensively. The story unfolds and creates at the same time. It enables invention and connection with real events.

Puppet animation - the director Ferdo

A story unites imagination and reality into a whole. It enables a logical sequence of events in a particular (literal) activity; it forms a tale. From a pedagogical point of view, a story represents an opportunity for personal experiences and joint activities, taking into consideration the possibility and encouragement to use imagination and capability for creation. Our brains process a story in a completely different way compared to the accepted rule, instruction, explanation or clarification. A story enables a creation with a reflection and creation of the inexistent or of what we do not know exists. It is new (for us) - an invention.

The story itself is a tool for achieving the planned goals. At the same time, the story continuously motivates children and teachers externally as well as internally. By the method of action research, we constantly create monologue, dialogue and multilogue. For the development of a child, it is important that (s)he knows all the time what is happening, what (s)he can influence, what can be changed and what can be created. The puppet attracts a child emotionally because it is his/her friend. A positive self-image encourages a child's self-development and the

competences that (s)he gains through experiential learning in an attractive way. The child knows (s)he is the most important agent in his/her life learning story. This empowerment gives a child momentum, and it motivates him/her towards active (co)operation. The child has the opportunity to play in different learning situations that influence the creation of a personal learning style and adaptation to life changes.

Over the years, the annual story is developed by the motivation of a child for playing, discovering and researching. The motivation of a child and his/her willingness are the threads and a challenge for a teacher in order to widen his/her professional standpoint and the aspiration for creation with other members of the professional team. The created story is therefore an extremely interesting thematic challenge for children.

The story is a magnet for experiential learning. Usually, it has three phases (unites): 1. Presentation of the City of Ljubljana in the Middle Ages and today - a project "Kralj Matjaž in Alenčica", 2. Space - project "Traja", 3. The meadows of Ljubljansko Barje - project "Škratovilka Minu", 4. Visiting different countries - project "Pomorščak Karlo", 5. Developing technological and technical skills - project "Pastir Cene in njegova Jagoda".

"The story is a link between tradition and modern life. It guided us toward the discovery of human history, tradition, customs, cuisine and ways of communication. We have connected the findings with similar contents and upgraded the knowledge," says teacher T.P.

"Music helps children to develop their imagination, ideas, innovativeness, critical thinking and creativity. When the music is accompanied by the puppets that introduce the story and the problem, a child's perception of the music is different. As the puppet presents the problem and asks the children for help, it arouses a process of empathy in a child. By doing that, it addresses child's sensual and emotional perception," believes teacher K.S.

"The puppet raises in each and every teacher his/her inner child that they nurse all the time," says teacher K.V

The thematic stories have an extremely strong influence on the atmosphere at the Trnovo kindergarten. They influence the organisation of educational process and professional work as well as on cooperation between experts in and out of the kindergarten, management, parents and children. They encourage the general research question: "How to enable vivid professional development for professional workers? How to establish learning from and between each other?" The stories contain humour, joyfulness, happiness and cheerfulness that can be seen in people's reactions, in learning, in education and in everyday life.

Our thoughts and ideas that are bound together have produced (created) a pedagogical goal that led to the innovation - pedagogic novelty called **"didactical map"**.

Pedagogical innovation II :

DIDACTICAL MAP

In the school year 2012/2013, the project group of the innovation project of the Institute of Education has, in collaboration with Dora Gobec and consultant Natalija Komljanc, PhD, developed, tested and evaluated the didactical tool PWP - didactical map. The map defines the holistic planning, implementation and evaluation of the school curriculum.

The tool reveals the following structure of the project: basic experiential learning and child's significant participation in the process of planning, the course and the process of activity of a child's and teacher's research: "What exactly have the children and the teachers gained from a particular project? and what were the impacts of the other factors? (learning context, parents' role, social interactions)".

We especially appreciate the self-reflection of expert workers, as they reflect on the functionality of the didactical tool considering the way a teacher reveals his/her personal and professional development as well as his/her relation with children and how the children react to the initiative and support of the teacher.

The didactical map is a novelty, a result of the quest for the path of assessment of the educational process and its impacts. It is a strategy, a help for an expert worker, and it is at his/her disposal when a teacher think responsibly about the path towards the goal and about the goal itself during the process of active implementation of education.

It is completely logical to optimally prepare in advance when taking a trip or when deciding on major work, costs, life changes or purchases. But when it comes to education, we tend to resort to coincidental decisions and even random reactions. The didactical

map helps us to logically and systematically lead the assessment of the development of a child, expert workers and a school curriculum.

Formative assessment has many definitions. In our case, it is defined as the form of assessing impact, reaction, mutual feedback, pedagogic communication, use of situational learning and other learning forms of children and teachers. The formative assessment is not only occasional evaluation, "checking", but it is a thoughtful planning of activities with a reason. It is based on situations, encouragements, needs and expectations of participants in the educational process, taking into consideration their pre-knowledge, needs and interests. A great emphasis in the process of formative assessment lies on the agreement about the formation of learning purpose and defining personal and collective learning goals. Great attention is paid to the learning methods and observation of learning styles. Furthermore, the content is (becomes and remains) a learning magnet that stimulates the child in such a way that it attracts the child's attention, activates him/her and keeps him/her interested until the goal is achieved. The expert worker gives meaning to the activities and results. Moreover, (s)he binds them together into new logical learning or educational beads (connections, attitudes, relations) and looks for the information on improvement. (S)he also chooses comments and encouragements so the learning process unfolds without disturbance in order to achieve the goal. The expert worker encourages (self-)reflections and learning, and (s)he also encourages children to gather the best sources and evidences to prove that they can, know, develop, need, give and share. Everyone is looking forward to the interesting portfolios that are not only the collections of happy hours in the kindergarten but reflections of the real development, personal growth and improvement that parents and teachers look forward to and of which every child is proud of and gives him/her the confidence to create new opportunities. The portfolio turns into a diary of life

and a new form of planning a creation and solutions to life challenges.

The use of updating - didactical map

The didactical map is meant for the whole organisation (including expert workers at the kindergarten and management as well) in order to facilitate the assessment of implementing the programme at the kindergarten. It is also designed for the expert workers who plan kindergarten curriculum and their own curriculum simultaneously. The didactical story (in our case it is also a literary story) has its course of events and time, therefore the didactical map takes into consideration the timeline of three (there could be less or more, depending on the story) learning / educational periods. The formation of the timeline coincides with the development of the didactical story that unfolds according to the methodology of (self-) regulation with the help of an independent, autonomous self-regulation process for which every teacher holds his/her responsibility in every social group. In the learning process, there are not just (mere) coincidences. The stories are written deliberately, they are animated and real and they are learning stories that teachers and children create more or less consciously and unconsciously. The planning is therefore a consequence of facts and the reason for necessity. Every plan has its theme and content (content units). The latter are formed based on the gathered facts and defined - determined in the logical (realistic) research question that follows our thinking. The research question is not only a good guide when it comes to determining the education strategy, but it also outlines and shapes our goal - the future of the learning path. Apart from the outcome, the goal also defines the methodological path and exposes the possibilities for assessing and evaluating the measures for determining successful achievement of the goal. Moreover, it dictates learning sources, materials and the creation of the learning environment. Learning environment does not only

represent a space, but it is a philosophy of work, and it includes actual actions in a space, so a thought can be born. A teacher is not a classic lecturer or an animator or puppeteer. A teacher is a strategist who precisely predicts the events and therefore creates an educational script leaving space and time in the plan and education itself for introducing reactions that happen in the direct - real - learning story. The teacher predicts, reflects and plans the alternatives as well, so that (s)he can logically and efficiently react to the messages and reactions of the children.

If you are better prepared for a journey, you are less likely to face unexpected situations. The important (main) part of the didactical story is the process of implementing the educational activity. It is equipped with the research (discovery) and creativity (of children and teachers and other participants in the process). During the creative process of discovery and development, the teacher directs the attention towards him/her-self, towards children, methods, education styles, sources and materials as well as towards the whole learning - educational environment. The attention is focused on all aspects and on the central picture of ongoing activities and interaction, including the specific features in the process of adaptation. Precisely because of such complexity, dynamics, extroversion and tolerance, it is important how the implementation of the educational process is carried out. It is recommended to follow and gather information on learning quality, a process which is alive and which changes all the time since various feedback, gathered and proven, forms the driving force, energy, source of power in the process of education of children by expert workers, parents and other participants. In that respect, all our senses are more than welcome, as are also all the external detectors that help to gather, select, sort and decide on the course of learning process. It is an active bank of information that is created and directed with the help of self-regulative mechanism in our brains.

While gathering information, the action research focuses on the observation of the information through the prism of three aspects - triangulation - suddenly, simultaneously, so that the data from an intersection would turn out to be the most relevant, that which we can trust and which we could use in the future process, especially because we should select one single goal from the different activities. Self-reflections and joint reflections on every educational level in the kindergarten are the source of power to start up any learning process, which is why we should pay attention to how to implement them and compare them to the information obtained directly in educational and pedagogical actions. Besides reflecting on the direct events, we should reflect also on long-term impacts and possible updates - innovations - in the process of education that indicate the well timed (current), interesting and real needs for updating the didactic of education. This means that the didactical map extracts and shows possible, logical and vital paths toward self-improvement of the educational vision, didactical updates from an organisational and leadership point of view. It is always good to keep the sources that turned out to be effective as well as reserve sources that might come in handy in the future.

If things are well foreseen and considered, it is much easier to leave on a demanding journey, however we need the awareness that certain circumstances cannot be predicted and we'll just have to face the challenges on the spot. We'll have to be innovative. At that point, we'll use the experiences of the entire team (group). We start the journey in a good mood as if we are going to a party that has been well prepared in advance - organised. When we are feeling good, our brains form different associations. They release different kinds of electric stimulation and chemical substances and lead to a different goal than they would if we felt angry, scared or uninterested. The didactical map enables the celebration for everyone and it makes it possible to experience success, happiness, cheerfulness and mostly a desire for learning. It is not only the child's mood that counts but also the teacher's

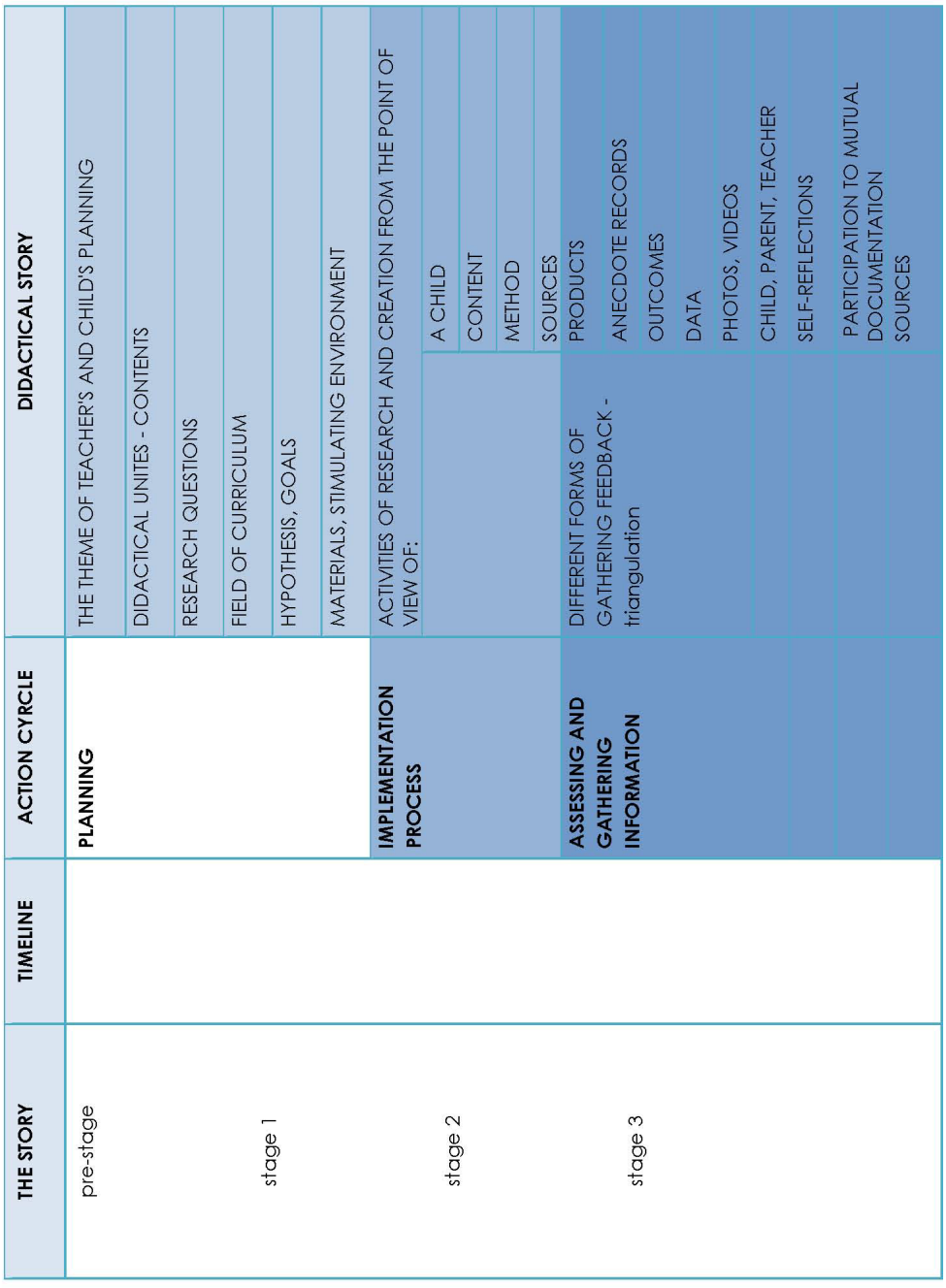
well-being, as his/her mood strongly influences the child's condition - his/her reaction (brain reaction). As they say, like attracts like.

This is the basis. In addition, it is necessary to master the entire situational learning, good observation and assessment and detecting of the needs and expectations of the children, teacher, environment or situation. All these elements dictate a logical educational process that is not artificial or only uncontrollable and planned only from the outside, in no connection with the real group of children and real teacher. Poor skills in situational education and weak assessment can often stop the natural flow of the learning process. Therefore, it is important to choose the right path for creating a school curriculum.

"In order to feel good in the organisation, teachers and a good team need good and efficient leadership, innovative spirit in the kindergarten, learning and educating of the entire professional staff as well as tight mutual cooperation. The same motto that applies for children goes for all employees: to be visible, heard and respected. Everyone forms their own universe and by providing good conditions and care, (s)he can participate his/her best on a professional and personal level. Taking care for an individual is the unwritten value of the kindergarten. Satisfied individuals form a contented harmonised group that reflects and encourages all the agents in the kindergarten," believes the project development team.

"By developing an innovative element - didactical map - we have gained a tool that enables expert workers more competent and holistic planning, implementation, assessing and evaluating of the educational process from the point of view of improvement and development of children, expert workers and project work with a puppet (PWP) itself. It enables professional workers and management insight into the process of planning, implementing and evaluating the results," adds the project group.

Picture: the didactical map (for further instructions visit http://www.vrtectrnovo.si/projekti.html)



Pedagogical innovation III:

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The curriculum is a term describing the ongoing work, the learning plan. There could be one plan. It begins and finishes with one story that has a beginning - introduction, middle and end. However, the plan can be continuous and permanent. It develops logically like a series and it can be a process plan including the entire logical dynamics of learning. A process school curriculum that does not include the didactical map is not necessarily alive, action oriented, dynamic and open and above all it is not necessarily logical. Therefore, the didactical map is the essential and key innovation, a motion element that upgrades from one episode to the next, logical for all pupils.

The plan can be moderate, if we believe we'll use only the things we already have and know. But it can be enriched, enabling more and offering more interesting experiences. If the goal has been cut down or is impractical and formed as an answer or rule, then it cannot provide optimal possibilities for research, discovery and reflection, but it only provides mechanical learning and repetition of the things that have already been heard. The plan that has multiple layers (multilayer) in curriculum enables more insight.

"Multilayer planning of PWP represents an open learning system that intertwines and connects co-dependent levels such as: 1. Narrative level (narration): the puppet and its story as representation of art, 2. Thematic level: themes for children's research and 3. The level of children's activities: experiential, process level of basic learning," emphasises the development team.

Instruction for updating curriculum

Maybe you will be tempted to try to plan, implement, assess and evaluate the educational process of learning with children and colleagues in a different way. For this reason, we have prepared a simple guide (manual) describing the instructions on dealing with this and making the novelty happen.

The organisation, i.e. kindergarten (school), is an open learning environment with a vision, strategy and mission of a teacher or a philosophy of education. All these basic organisational elements support and complement each other, having also the power to self-improve and self-restore.

Like every organisation, our kindergarten also has a clearly set vision about what it would like to achieve. The kindergarten vision has been modifying over the years in the direction of assessing new theoretical findings about child development and achieved development tendencies of the kindergarten on the level of school curriculum.

Constant formative assessment together with reflections paves the way for further qualitative implementation of preschool education and practice in kindergarten. This part of the vision represents the constant in the timeline, a frame within which the children, expert workers, parents and environment dictate our tempo, rhythm and content.

The vision is experienced in mutual creation, which is developed in a safe, open, encouraging and pleasant environment, where children, management, he professional team and parents live with each other and learn from each other.

knight games

Given that the kindergarten curriculum is an open and flexible national document, it surely gives the opportunity to everyone to create and update the educational process and draft an educational plan. The concept and plan are in parallel with the third document - the learning plan. All together form a unit that enables an independent search for the most appropriate strategy of self-development. At the Trnovo kindergarten, the following question was raised: "What and which tools do the children and teachers need in order to develop personal strategies and skills that are in accordance with their personal development?"

The management of the educational organisation influences the creation of the mentioned documents and conditions for implementing the pedagogic work. It enables a creative, innovative and open learning environment where the whole team of expert workers can show their skills. The leader instils energy into co-workers so they (can) guide their enthusiasm towards the desired goal. The management and expert workers constantly encourage innovativeness and creativeness. Their impacts unite in joint professionalism and originality. The kindergarten's innovative cooperation in lifelong learning represents a constant for us.

The awareness of autonomy creates the conditions for employees as well as for children and their parents, and it creates a stimulating learning environment, an environment that is trustworthy, supportive and open and in which everyone can follow the mutual goals and creations. Satisfaction with the achievements is a strong motivation for devoted work, enabling all colleagues to be visible, heard and respected.

Based on that, multi-annual and annual school curriculum is created. It comprises several layers of the plan and agreements on the best, most optimal course of learning and education. The layers are the following: personal curriculum of a child and teacher, which is the core of the curriculum. The core has to be able to self-develop over the life time. The life at the institution and the institution itself request and enable in their foundation (education) the children to learn with the support of experts and teachers. A child, human being, learns on his/her own but also with the support of teachers, mentors and wiser persons and through peer and environmental interaction (socialisation).

The curriculum (plan of the learning course) creates, grows, forms and comes to life along with the personal plan of the learning course of a child (human-being, individual and less experienced one) in order that he/she becomes more experienced. This is the basic purpose or goal of the creation of learning course (self-learning, self-education, learning from life and for life).

Example: *Teacher Frančka has prepared an interaction between the teacher, children and puppet. It was a lesson in the Slovenian language for Perlita the parrot who wanted to learn the language. The children had been thinking how to help Perlita learn. As Perlita came to the group, Luka brought his lorry. Perlita could not pronounce the word "lorry" even after they tried hard with the pronunciation for a long time. At the beginning, Luka found it funny, but after a while, he gave up. He was about to walk away with disappointment, but a smile suddenly crossed his face.*

Luka addressed Perlita - the teacher and said: "I know! Try to say "van", maybe you can do it." Perlita tried very hard and pronounced the word correctly. Luka felt relieved and happy. Luka's motivation for learning was restored.

The teacher is patient, persistent and supportive. (S)he encourages the formation of the child's personal curriculum. This is a very good method of diagnostics of the child's pre-knowledge and detection of his/her needs and desired (expectations). If a child wishes and when (s)he wishes, (s)he introduces the desires and expectations of learning to the teacher, parents or peers. A child needs to be given enough time to spend it with peers in social and learning groups, so that they can get to know each other and to get familiar with who expects what, what they learn and what they desire. In this way, a teacher can also find out the things a child does yet not know and is not yet able to do. And this is the right moment for a teacher to add his/her personal curriculum to the child's (the things I know, desire, expect, what are my needs for learning, support, etc.) and to introduce his/her expectations and his/her own curriculum in order that the students can get to know each other and give meaning to their time spent together as well as to encouragement and cooperation. A group can put personal curricula on display, in sight, it can outline them and it can present them in an interesting way, so that the others can find themselves in them.

Because the teacher is familiar with the desires and expectations of the kindergarten (vision, mission, philosophy) and the conditions, (s)he surrounds, wraps and enriches his/her personal curricula in the social learning group with the desires and expectations of the kindergarten. Thus, individuals become a part of the learning community and can therefore influence their individual or mutual expectations in the process of adaptation to life, education and learning. The management of the kindergarten is interested in children's personal plans for learning together withteachers in a particular learning community. It also

successfully balances and regulates mutual needs and expectations. In the process, the management has the support of all the expert workers, parents and outsourced experts - consultants.

"*My strong point is interpretation, the ability to adapt into the event, tale and person - a puppet. I have a vivid imagination that sometimes takes me away from the planned. Yet, I have introduced several elements into the group such as ease, inspiration, cheerfulness, thinking, self-conscience, action and courage*," says teacher P.A.

Along with the learning process, the personal curricula of children are logically enriched within the school curriculum of the kindergarten in parallel with the expectations of the broader social community, regional (local) and national plans and curricula and global visions of the world. In this way, the children learn and discover the conditions that give them the possibilities and opportunities for new explorations and discoveries as well as new rich and firm experiences.

The curriculum is not a one time process that is final but it continues, it is procedural and it is exceptionally useful for planning of the school curriculum in the so called didactical map (didactics - a theory of teaching - and the map - a template with a holistic image of objects (elements) that influence the course of work, in our case on learning and educating). The didactical map represents a holistic image of elements that guide the teacher through the process of experiential learning in order to achieve mutual learning goals.

By knowing a child's personal expectations and working styles, a teacher can more easily suggest or guide the child toward creation of a (mutual) didactical or learning story. In order to create an educative story, a teacher, together with children, gives meaning to the following concepts: learning themes, content, units,

research question and learning goal. Moreover, the teacher chooses the methods (style, learning principles) and learning sources and creates or finds a suitable learning environment in order to achieve the goal.

Formation of animated cartoon - pixilation

Case study

"Innovation is a part of our practice and is integrated into our everyday work. Our vision and the set goals guide us toward mutual learning (cooperation, mutual relationships, exchange of experiences), learning with a purpose in order to obtain broad knowledge and skills and features that adults and children need to have successful and qualitative life and work as individuals in the community (children - expert workers - parents - environment).

During the first year (2006/2007) of our creation and development of a pedagogic innovation, the entire team of experts, under the guidance of Dora Gobec, leader of the development project, and in the framework of seminars on action development, dealt with the development of our so called planning of the thematic research, where we performed synthesis of procedural and thematic planning. During the second year (2007/2008), we used the same methodology and made use of heuristic methods to explore possible approaches to the project work and processed two research themes: Earth and Water. We gained experiences and professional skills in how to guide children according to the learning methods through discovery. During the third year (2008/2009), we created, planned and developed the story with a puppet, thematic units and activities for children. During the fourth (2009/2010) and following years, we formed and continued the method of project work with a puppet (PWP) and its story. The puppet has become the "third person". The originality of the project work with a puppet has been continued through artistic and humanistic upgrading of the project work, and it has been carried out in a concrete educational process. In the years 2012/2013, we developed the didactical map with the intention to evaluate the school curriculum and annual PWP in collaboration with the Educational Institute. The map is an innovative tool that enriches and gives meaning to the holistic planning of school curriculum.

The entire team of experts is involved in the educational process for development of innovation. In this way, we can join the things we do, think and feel in a logical unit. Our learning and education is problem oriented, experiential and directed toward critical thinking and development of thinking habits that represent an integral part of our learning process. In our internal seminars, we combine practical experiences with theoretical knowledge, enabling the transformation of theory into practice and encouraging the learning of independent functioning. The practice leads to new discoveries, especially when we think about it and combine it with the knowledge, theories and opinions of others. The reflections are shared with others in a relaxed and equal environment. It is only through the relations with others that we get to know and control ourselves and give meaning at the same time to our professional mission within the diversity of mutual relations in the working process. This kind of learning helps us develop our ideas that we clarify, spread, adapt, modify and finally form as groups. Doing that, we capture different interests, characteristic features, values, relations with ourselves and others and other personal and social skills. We are aware that we can be stronger if we do things together and if we consider other people's knowledge, opinions and beliefs.

The annual projects of action research help us gain new competences that improve our work. Consequently, everyone involved in the process is more satisfied and professionally fulfilled, including the entire professional staff, which grows and learns. This can be observed in better quality of work, better understanding of developmental needs and specific features of a child and what is the most important, greater connection between the professional staff and more successful solving of mutual challenges.

In our research paper of 2009, the kindergarten staff evaluated the training of expert workers for the development of innovation of the pedagogic practice from the point of view of experiential learning and education. The subject of the research was the role of experiential learning in the educational process, to which our kindergarten pays special attention. Group interviews and qualitative analyses of interview data enabled us to establish how the expert workers in kindergarten understand experiential learning and how they implement it in their work. The results have shown that experiential learning is understood as a holistic approach that can be implemented on every level of educational practice at any time. A great source of knowledge that was gained through the experiences was mutual learning in our internal seminars on development. The possibilities to learn from other co-workers who have more experience represent a great value for the teachers. The experiences are important for cooperating and facing different challenges. New knowledge and experiences that the expert workers gain and create during the process of social interaction are simultaneously introduced and tested in their work with children. They are aware of the fact that their role, which is focused on the children, is decisive and very important in the process of experiential learning of children. Nevertheless, in order to be successful in learning, a child needs to be willing and capable to learn.

The expert workers see the opportunities to use their knowledge in practice in learning from each other (when the experiential learning is not only gained from others but they too can be that source of knowledge), from studying different literature and theories and through practical and field workshops, getting familiar with art and culture, the internet, ICT (information communication technology) and their direct life experiences.

Musical instrument which children named "murmurator" (žuborišče)

"*If we gladly share the gained knowledge with co-workers, often also with parents, we have the possibility and opportunity to discover and develop on a personal, professional as well as social level that leads to progress toward critical, independent and responsible decision making and behaviour*" (by management team).

Conclusion

The project work forms the story. The project is one of the forms of a plan, event planning (events) or expected outcomes. The project (the concept of project) means the plan or a group of plans in order to achieve the goal. The projects can be personal or mutual, usually in a kindergarten setting. The project includes all the elements that the involved need for its realisation and the estimation of its quality or value. The story can only be carried out when the project is implemented. The project planning is needed for the story to happen.

The project planning includes (is structured from) the plan, which takes into consideration the starting point, performance of the activities, evaluation of the effects (outcomes) and reports on the achievements. The project work can only be modified into a process when it is enriched by the structure of the basic elements of action research such as: re-planning on the basis of reflection, performing action, assessing and gathering of information - traceability of acquiring current goal for achieving the basic goal and new reflections (self-reflection of members and the group, also outside observers - consultants, critical friends). The subject is therefore the introduction of an action plan into the project planning of the didactical (learning) story. The story will be co-formed and perceived differently by each individual, though probably (if all the planned circumstances are given) as an optimal learning (educational, adaptation) story that will leave a mark in their long-term memory and will be a pleasant example for solving life challenges. If the story includes a lot of creative elements, the concept of creative connectivity of the unknown with the things we already know will leave a permanent mark in our thoughts. If the story was open to seeking the best decisions, the pupil will permanently memorise not only the goal itself but the goal that was accompanied by unusual, extraordinary and rich notes. Thus, the pupil learned how to create reference goals and set the quality

measures (of success). That pattern will help a pupil solve exceptional life changes by using preferably an innovative approach (more so than a prognosticated one in the current goal). If we follow this path, society does not need to be concerned about its healthy and logical progress and growth. This sort of work will enable people to sharpen their senses and to be fast and skilful in detecting the right things that they will be able to use in the next stage.

Traja's return to space

Glossary of terms

We invite you to read our glossary of the selected terms in which we have briefly defined different terms used in this manual. For further reading, we suggest you to take a peek at the listed sources.

No.	concept	definition
1.	action research	organising activities that have a particular applied development goal
2.	didactical map	tool, auxiliary, learning complement for planning, fulfilling and assessing as well as evaluating educational work and roles or interactions in the process
3.	imagination	open area for associations; an extremely important element for creativity and creative thinking
4.	formative assessment	regular assessment; systematic assessment and evaluation of the observed parameters in a particular timeframe
5.	innovation	novelty; expected or unexpected, different outcome as a consequence of complex and holistic thinking and functioning; new element is a total novelty or a combination of familiar elements, formed in a new whole
6.	school curriculum	planed, fulfilled, assessed and evaluated educational activities
7.	puppet	medium, the element of art that opens the imagination; in our case it is "a child's friend"

8.	mental reaction of a child	reflective reaction, children’s feedback to teachers, strategies of child's thinking
9.	plan	pre-imagined activity outline of children's and teachers' content.
10.	discovery	participation of an individual in research activities, taking a trip to the unknown place with the desire to get to know and find something new
11.	open learning environment	open with a wide selection of contents, activities and materials that enable and encourage numerous paths, methods, approaches and tools and which are included in the given situation and conditions considering all the key agents
12.	personal and mutual goal	delimitation of the expected and desired challenges of an individual or a group
13.	pedagogic intervention	approach of the planned intervention, with the purpose to achieve the imagined effect
14.	updating	intentional and planned introduction of /positive/ changes or novelties into the usual practice
15.	feedback	reaction to the given information; passing and assessing the answer of the recipient
16.	crossing groups	the possibility for a child to freely chose activities, adults and peers in regard to his/her willingness and interests

17.	development levels of novelty	there are 5 levels within the innovation project: 1. personal development 2. introducing excellent practice 3. developing excellent practice 4. invention, 5. innovation (you can find more on www.zrss.si under the tab innovation projects)
18.	research question	basic question that is the centre of further development of thoughts and actions of our research
19.	reflection	consideration, evaluation, feedback, look back on the work done /by individual or a group
20.	self-management	recognition of personal patterns of thinking, feeling and conducting and its /good/ handling
21.	self-realisation	the process of following the personal vision, attitude, potentials
22.	self-education, self-development	following your inner impulse and carrying them out together with other impulses; connecting and complementing inner and outer motivation
23.	situation learning	learning from life for life, connected to observation and one's own participation in a particular social situation
24.	social learning group	group that socialises - interconnects and learns at the same time - adapts : all for one and one for all
25.	cooperation	mutual connection and function for everyone's sake
26.	learning from each other	mutual sharing of skills, experiences, knowledge and support

27.	learning opportunity	environment offering the possibilities for cognition and acquirement of something new, yet unknown, a challenge
28.	teaching magnet	something that attracts us irresistibly and irrepressibly in order to get to know, research and find something new
29.	multilayer curriculum	levels of planning the course of learning that continuously complement are the following: personal (of a child and a teacher), school or kindergarten, local or regional, national and global; multi-level connection and co-dependent influence of several factors while creating the map that leads to the chosen, imagined, expected and desired goal
30.	story	narration; context; the world of making sense that is written down and lives on paper

Bibliography

1. Antič, S. (2009). Indikatorji zadovoljstva staršev z vrtcem. Magistrska naloga.

2. Antič, S., Gobec, D., Garvas, M., Kolar, M. (2007). Oris vzgojnega koncepta edukacijskega modela temeljnega učenja v Vrtcu Trnovo. Sodobna pedagogika, letnik 2, št. 58, str. 6-30.

3. Antič, S., Gobec, D., Garvas, M., Kolar, M. (2007). Vzgojna komponenta okoljske vzgoje v edukacijskem modelu Vrtca Trnovo. Raziskovalno izobraževalno središče Dvorec Rakičan, II. Mednarodni znanstveni posvet na temo Ekologija za boljši jutri. 16.-18. april 2007, str. 248-251.

4. Batistič Zorec, M. (2003). Razvojna psihologija in vzgoja v vrtcih. Ljubljana: Inštitut za psihologijo osebnosti.

5. Garvas, M. (2010). Izkustveno učenje kot praksa in teorija izobraževanja in usposabljanja strokovnih delavcev v Vrtcu Trnovo (evalvacija nadaljnjega izobraževanja in usposabljanja z vidika izkustvenega učenja). Andragoška spoznanja, št 1, leto 2010. Ljubljana.

6. Gobec, D. (2000). Iz take smo snovi kot sanje. Projektno delo z lutko – pedagoški model milanskih vrtcev. Lutka, februar 2000, št. 56, str. 36-43.

7. Gobec, D. (2011). Zgodba o inoviranju vrtca, spreminjanju lokalne skupnosti in izzivih družbi. Mednarodna konferenca Vloga kakovosti vrtcev pri oblikovanju ugleda mestne občine – lokalne skupnosti in širše. V organizaciji Vrtca Trnovo, Ljubljana.

8. Komljanc, N. (2006). Skriti zaklad: inovacijski projekti vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodov v sodelovanju z Zavodom RS za šolstvo in Ministrstvom za šolstvo in šport. Ljubljana, Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo.

9. Komljanc, N. (2008). Učenje je svobodno. Vzgoja in izobraževanje za človekove pravice. Pedagoški inštitut Ljubljana, str. 93 – 101.

10. Komljanc, N. (2007). Kurikulum: kaj posodabljati in kako. Kurikul kot proces in razvoj. Zbornik prispevkov. Zavod RS za šolstvo, str. 90 – 97.

11. Komljanc, N. (2010). Usmerjanje osebnega razvoja. Razredni pouk. Zavod RS za šolstvo. Revija, letnik 12, št. 1, str. 39 – 43.

12. Komljanc, N. (2012). Koncept odprtega učenja. Trajnostni razvoj v šoli in vrtcu. Zavod RS za šolstvo. Revija, letnik 6, št. 1-2, str. 7 – 11.
http://www.ediplome.fm-kp.si/Antic_Suzana_20090929.pdf (3.2.2013).

13. http://www.zrss.si/default.asp?rub=212. 15.7.2013.

14. http://www.vrtectrnovo.si/projekti.html . 15.7.2013.

15. Vigotski, L. (1977). Mišljenje i govor. Nolit, Beograd.